

## Legislative Water Commission Update 03/12/2018

**ERRORS? OMISSIONS?** If found, please notify [jim.stark@lcc.leg.mn](mailto:jim.stark@lcc.leg.mn).

*Interested reader: This update contains a roundup of Minnesota water news, as well as articles from beyond Minnesota that may inform members. It also includes summaries of meetings I have monitored and reports I have read, as well as information about upcoming events. During the Legislative Session, updates on water-related legislation and committee activities are added. Any errors or omissions are inadvertent.*

*It has been my good fortune to have worked with many of you during my tenure with the U. S Geological Survey. If we have not met, I hope to meet you soon. I look forward to continuing to work on water issues that are so important to all of us in Minnesota*

*Jim Stark, Director, MN Legislative Water Commission*

*100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Rm 65 State Office Building*

*St. Paul, MN 55155*

*Phone: 651/284-6431*

*Subscribe to the weekly update & follow LWC meetings at: [www.lcc.leg.mn/lwc/](http://www.lcc.leg.mn/lwc/)*

### WATER NEWS AND ACTIONS

**Committee Reviews 3M Settlement:** The State of Minnesota reached a \$850 million-dollar settlement with 3M for natural resource damages caused by perfluorinated chemicals, referred to as PFCs. Committees in the House and Senate have each reviewed the agreement. According to Kirk Koudelka, Assistant Commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the settlement will provide \$720 million dollars immediately to help provide clean drinking water for residents of Afton, Cottage Grove, Lake Elmo, Newport, St. Paul Park, Woodbury and other east metro communities. The efforts would include treating existing contaminated wells and connecting homes with private wells to municipal drinking water systems. Funds also could be used to improve fish and wildlife habitat in the Mississippi and St Croix Rivers.

Visit [www.pca.state.mn.us/3M-settlement](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/3M-settlement)

**This is National Groundwater Week:** About 90 percent of our freshwater supplies lie underground, but less than 27 percent of the water Americans use comes from underground sources, which illustrates the under-utilization of groundwater. In Minnesota groundwater is a very important resource. There are:

- Approximately 382,000 residential wells statewide
- 918 community water systems use groundwater for 2,910,000 people
- 486 non-community, non-transient water systems use groundwater for 65,700 people
- 5,400 non-community, transient water systems use groundwater for 524,000 people
- 5,390 irrigation wells used, serving 1,890 farms and 467,000 acres
- Groundwater sustains our lakes and flow in rivers during times of drought

Visit the National Groundwater Association web page:

<http://www.ngwa.org/Events-Education/awareness/Pages/default.aspx>

The March edition of the MPCA's electronic newsletter contained articles on the following topics. The full articles can be seen by visiting: [March 2018](#)

- Hatfield dishes the dirt (ok, soil) on excess nitrogen in waters
- North Fork Crow River 'one watershed' plan open for review
- RCRC launches work on Redwood, Cottonwood WRAPS
- Root River Watershed-1 Plan ready to go with projects
- DNR meets with livestock producers about groundwater use
- Lower Minnesota River Watershed: Urban, rural, and polluted
- Watershed news briefs
- BWSR plan seeks working lands and watershed restoration
- Nitrogen in spotlight at conferences

**Sulfate Standard:** A bill regarding the sulfate standard has been introduced in the House. The bill would nullify the existing wild rice water-quality sulfate standard and require the MPCA to begin a new rulemaking process if the agency moved forward with adoption of a new standard. File Number: H.F. 3280 Date: March 7, 2018 Version:

**New report--Sulfate in Minnesota's waters:** A new peer-reviewed publication, by the Science Museum of Minnesota, describes how sulfate changes lakes and streams. In one [10-year study in northern Minnesota](#), the researchers teased out complicated connections between sulfate, mercury, water, and weather. Source: Minnesota Public Radio.

**Governor Dayton** has released a [report summarizing key findings from ten Water Quality Town Hall meetings](#) held last year with Minnesotans across the state. The report, which summarizes more than 3,500 suggestions from more than 2,000 meeting attendees, recommends strategies to boost water quality education efforts, empower local action and collaboration, and increase investments in local clean water infrastructure, among other ideas. This session, Governor Dayton has proposed a \$167 million investment through his [Public Works proposal](#), to improve local clean water infrastructure and ensure all Minnesota have access to clean, affordable water, no matter where they live.

## **SURFACE WATER/STORMWATER**

**GoMN:** [Antibiotics are ending up in Minnesota's lakes, so here's how to dispose of them properly](#)

**The Dickenson Press:** [Flood diversion task force finds common ground in some, not all cases;](#)

**MPR:** [Saving the Fargo-Moorhead flood diversion project will be costly](#)

**Sleepy Eye Herald Dispatch:** [Local students participate in Minnesota River basin water monitoring program](#)

**UMD:** [Study: Too many nutrients make microbes less responsive](#)

**Star Tribune:** [Minnesota briefs: Public comment sought on state's tainted waters](#)

**The DNR's "Minnesota Conservation Volunteer** (March- April, 2018) has a great article on the impact of the Clean Water, land and Legacy Amendment. Visit: [www.dnr.state.mn.us/mcvmagazine/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mcvmagazine/index.html)

## Floods and Droughts

**National Flood Forecast Center, North Central Region:** The snowpack around the region is widespread but amounts are relatively light. Snow depth is only an inch, or less, for portions of western Minnesota. Based on current conditions and on long-range weather forecasts for the spring, flood potential for the state is average or below average. For details, visit: [www.weather.gov/ncrfc](http://www.weather.gov/ncrfc)

## GREAT LAKES

**DNR:** [Great Lakes- St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact Annual Water Conservation and Efficiency Assessment](#)

**MPCA:** ["It takes a \(shipping\) village: Duluth's harbor springs to life"](#)

**Lake Superior Lake-wide Action and Management Plan (LAMP)** is a binational plan for restoring and protecting the Lake Superior ecosystem. This 2017 annual report highlights accomplishments and progress during the past year including outreach, monitoring, and protection and restoration actions. The LAMP is developed and implemented by the Lake Superior Partnership, which is led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Environment and Climate Change Canada. The [Lake Superior Lakewide Action and Management Plan](#) was released in 2016. Visit: <https://binational.net/2017/10/24/lar2017/>

**U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service** reports finding bloody red shrimp in the St. Louis River in 2017.

Contact: e-mail: [Henry.Quinlan@fws.gov](mailto:Henry.Quinlan@fws.gov)

Phone: (715) 682-6185 Ext.112

**Great Lakes Protection Fund** will host a webinar about the proposal process: "Call for People, Ideas and Projects". The 45-minute webinar will take place Thursday, March 22, 2018 at 11:00am Central time.

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8839620877633803266>

To read the full RFP, along with FAQs and illustrative project ideas, visit website at: <http://glpf.org/get-funding/projects-wanted/request-for-preproposals/>.

**New Report Released: The US Water Alliance has released a report: An Equitable Water Future: Opportunities for the Great Lakes Region.** With support from the Joyce Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the new report lays out an agenda for creating more equitable water systems in the Great Lakes region. Building the [national water equity briefing paper](#), this report takes an in-depth look at the Great Lakes, a region with abundant water assets that also faces serious equity challenges including failing infrastructure, the impacts of a changing climate, lead in water, affordability, workforce inclusion, and more. You can find the full report [here](#).

**NOAA** has announced the availability of up to \$3 million in Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant funding for restoration projects in 2018. This federal funding opportunity (FFO) is intended for habitat restoration in the Great Lakes region, supporting healthy ecosystems and resilient coastal communities in Great Lakes states. The closing date is March 12. Detailed description and requirements can be found at <http://www.grants.gov/>, funding number [NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2018-2005487](#).

**Protect and restore lakes, streams in St. Louis River watershed:** Often overshadowed by the more polluted St. Louis River, lakes and other rivers in this watershed have their own water quality issues. The MPCA recently released two reports on water conditions in the [St. Louis River watershed](#). The reports are open for comment through March 22. The two reports are the [Total Maximum Daily Loads \(TMDL\) study](#) and the [Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies \(WRAPS\) report](#). The two are companion documents that quantify pollutant levels, identify pollution sources, and propose ways to return water quality to an acceptable level.

**Premier scenic area also home to increasing development, impairments:** *Lake Superior's North Shore between Duluth's Lester River and Beaver Bay is one of the state's premier scenic and recreational attractions. Unfortunately, increasing development, altered drainage, forests and vegetation have contributed to seven impaired streams. Two MPCA draft water quality reports, open for public comment through March 28 address these problems and propose several restoration and protection strategies. The reports open for public comment are the [Total Maximum Daily Loads \(TMDL\) study](#) and the [Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies \(WRAPS\) report](#). The two are companion documents that quantify pollutant levels, identify pollution sources, and propose ways to return water quality to an acceptable level. The draft reports are available on the MPCA's [Lake Superior - South Watershed webpage](#) or at MPCA's Duluth office, 525 Lake Avenue South, 55802. Comments should be submitted in writing by March 28 to Brian Fredrickson, MPCA, 525 Lake Avenue South, Suite 400, Duluth, MN 55802, or by email to [brian.fredrickson@state.mn.us](mailto:brian.fredrickson@state.mn.us). No comments will be accepted by telephone. However, if you need further assistance or clarification, please call Fredrickson at 218-302-6604.*

## **NORTHERN BORDER LAKES**

The 2018 Rainy River- Lake of the Woods Watershed Forum was held in International Falls, on March 7-8. The meeting focused on invasive species, algal blooms, nutrient loading, and fisheries in the northern border lakes and rivers of Minnesota and Canada. One of the significant presentations was a paper by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change. The presentation discussed the importance of warmer water and phosphorus as driving increases in blooms of harmful algae in Lake of the Woods. The Forum Program and Abstracts for the 2018 International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Forum are available: [www.lowwsf.com/watershed-forum](http://www.lowwsf.com/watershed-forum)

## **WATER SUPPLY**

**MPR:** [Minn. cities want a break as they face costly sewer work, new rules](#)

**Metropolitan Council:** A workshop (March 1 in Brooklyn Park) and hearing (St. Paul, March 13) are being held on wastewater reuse and related policy, Contact Tim O'Donnell at (651) 602-1477 for details.

## **WASTEWATER**

**MPR:** [Minn. cities want a break as they face costly sewer work, new rules](#)

**Metropolitan Council:** A workshop (March 1 in Brooklyn Park) and hearing (St. Paul, March 13) are being held on wastewater reuse and related policy, Contact Tim O'Donnell at (651) 602-1477 for details.

## AGRICULTURE AND WATER

**West Central Tribune:** [Kandiyohi County adopts buffer enforcement ordinance](#)

**The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)** has been evaluating the feasibility of developing a Working Lands Incentive Program to help advance research and implementation of perennial crops and cash cover crops. During a workshop, they discussed market opportunities and the bio-economy needed to support this shift. Participants were asked to share their ideas about a working lands incentive program. BWSR staff are taking this input back to their planning group to flesh out recommendations and next steps. The program is supported by an appropriation from the legislature.

**Minnesota's plans to reduce nitrates** in drinking water are moving closer to completion. Gov. Mark Dayton and agriculture commissioner Dave Frederickson [outlined a proposal years in the making](#): By creating a system of voluntary and mandatory measures on farmland and in public water supplies, the state hopes to safeguard and improve water quality across the state.

## EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

**Minneapolis/St Paul Business Journal:** [PolyMet offers \\$544 million to cover risks at Minnesota mine](#)  
Pioneer Press: [Minnesota PUC wants more details on Line 3 oil pipeline](#)

**The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources** released a draft permit for PolyMet Mining, a major step forward for what's poised to be the first copper-nickel mine in the state. The project would spur a new mining industry on the Iron Range, but would carry with it new environmental risks in the most pristine corner of the state. Visit: <http://polymet.mn.gov/>

## OPINIONS

**St Louis Dispatch:** [Editorial: Clean water? Don't worry your pretty little heads about it](#)

**MinnPost:** [Minnesota can have both mining and clean water](#)

South Washington County Bulletin: [Rep. Tony Jurgens viewpoint: Investigating water pollution lawsuit](#)

## BEYOND MINNESOTA

### REGIONAL

**MLive:** [Michigan bill proposes nation's lowest PFAS limit in drinking water](#)

**Foxconn's bid for Lake Michigan water** is the latest test of the decade-old Great Lakes Compact, an [agreement](#) among the region's states intended to make it almost impossible to direct water outside the natural basin of the Great Lakes unless it is added to certain products, such as beer and soft drinks. Foxconn plans to divert 7 million gallons/day of Lake MI water:

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-met-foxconn-lake-michigan-water-20180305-story.html>

## NATIONAL

**USDA:** [USDA Highlights \\$40 Million in Infrastructure Investments in Rural Communities](#)

**USGS: Pharmaceuticals in Water:** The presence of pharmaceuticals in aquatic systems in the United States and Europe is well documented. Pharmaceuticals are designed to induce a biochemical response at very low concentrations, raising questions regarding the risk for unintended sub lethal effects in exposed non-target organisms. Visit: [https://toxics.usgs.gov/highlights/2017-10-17-prioritisation\\_of\\_pharmaceuticals.html](https://toxics.usgs.gov/highlights/2017-10-17-prioritisation_of_pharmaceuticals.html).

**EurekaAlert:** [Landmark paper on global oceans garners international award](#); *"Five percent of all the nitrogen in the Gulf of Mexico comes from Minnesota and 11 percent comes from Iowa," said John A. Downing, director of the University of Minnesota Sea Grant"*

## MEETINGS

**The Legislative Water Commission** met on February 26. During that meeting the Commission members discussed and prioritized wastewater action items for the upcoming year. Draft Minutes of the meeting may be found at: [www.lcc.leg.mn/lwc/](http://www.lcc.leg.mn/lwc/)

The biennial 2018 **Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference (UMISC)** will be a Joint Conference with the North American Invasive Species Management Association, October 15-18, 2018 at the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester Abstract Submission Is Open. Deadline to Submit an Abstract for Presentation: Wednesday, April 11, 2018. They are expecting about 700 people to attend. See <https://www.umisc.net/> or contact Doug Jensen, conference co-chair.

## REPORTS

**DNR:** MN Stream Flow Report – ended for the year

**DNR: HydroClim Minnesota** Visit: [www.dnr.state.mn.us/hydroclim/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/hydroclim/index.html)

**Mankato State University:** Minnesota River weekly update: To sign up to receive the Minnesota River Weekly Update go to the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance's Bulletin Board at: <http://mail.mnsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/mrwa/> By subscribing to the Bulletin Board you will receive the Weekly Update.

USGS: Contaminants of Emerging Concern: Effects on fish in the Great Lakes.  
Visit: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0269749117344032>

### Assessment of CECs and adverse effects in fish in the Great Lakes

**basin.** <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0269749117344032> [if you don't have full access with that link, try this author link: <https://authors.elsevier.com/c/1WZPLzLNSKLaW>

**Gov. Mark Dayton** recently released a [report summarizing key findings from 10 Water Quality Town Hall meetings](#) held last year across the state. The report, which summarizes more than 3,500 suggestions from more than 2,000 meeting participants, recommends strategies to boost water quality education efforts,

empower local action and collaboration, and increase investments in local clean water infrastructure, among other ideas. Improving education and reducing runoff ranked among the top themes and comments.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- Mar 19-20: DNR's **The Science of Healthy Waters: The Ditching Dilemma** workshop; Blue Earth, more info to come [here](#)
- April 12-14, 2018: **Freshwater Society's: The State of Water Conference**; details to come. Visit: <https://freshwater.org>
- May 1-3: MN-ND-SD AWWA **Surface Water Treatment Workshop**; Courtyard by Marriott in Moorhead; info to come @ [www.AWWAND.org](http://www.AWWAND.org)
- May 10, 2018: **Smart Water Technology Roundtable: Workshop for Solutions in Water Treatment**; Uponor, 5925 148<sup>th</sup> St W, Apple Valley; contact [Steve.Riedel@state.mn.us](mailto:Steve.Riedel@state.mn.us) for more info
- June 3-7, 2018: American Society of Civil Engineers **World Environmental and Water Resources Congress**; details to come at [www.ewricongress.org](http://www.ewricongress.org)
- July 10-12, 2018: US Water Alliance's **One Water Summit** will be at the Hyatt hotel in downtown Minneapolis; details to come.
- **WE ARE MINNESOTA WATER**: The Minnesota Historical Center, in cooperation with several state agencies will have a display at the Capitol through March 11. The display now goes on tour across the state. Visit: [We are Water MN](#) for the tour locations and dates. For more information contact: Margaret Wagner: 651-201-6488, [margaret.wagner@state.mn.us](mailto:margaret.wagner@state.mn.us)
- The St. Louis River Summit brings together key audiences working in the region. The Summit actively fosters communication, networking and problem-solving on issues affecting the environmental health of the estuary and related community well-being. The Summit will be held at UW-Superior's campus. March 13 - March 14, 2018. <http://www.cvent.com/d/2tq1yf>
- **Next meeting of the Legislative Water Commission: March 26 at 6:00 pm.** Visit: <https://www.lcc.leg.mn/lwc/>
- **Workshop on Harmful Algal Blooms, March 29.** Visit: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Any8Co2eE9hKAcvk-bT-qPi5Y3MFTTr1W/view>